

South Asia Center

OUTREACH BULLETIN

Spring 2007

Director's Message

The South Asia Center is vital and busy, and we have much to celebrate this year. To begin with our reaffirmed, ongoing existence: We learned late last spring that both proposals submitted by the Cornell-Syracuse consortium to the Department of Education were successful. Our consortium was renewed as a FLAS (Foreign Language and Area Studies) center and an NRC (National Resource Center) for South Asian Studies. It is true that Cornell-Syracuse South Asia consortium has been renewed consistently every three-year cycle since its birth in 1985. Nonetheless, the process was, as always, a nail-biting experience. Every cycle some old Centers lose their status while newly ambitious institutions receive awards. Our success is a resounding recognition of the ever increasing excellence of our South Asia faculty, our language teaching, our library resources, and our auspicious location in the Maxwell School's Moynihan Institute, as well as a fruitful partnership with Cornell. As Director, I am deeply grateful to many persons whose efforts led to this success, among whom our dedicated and overworked Associate Director, Jishnu Shankar and Outreach Coordinator, Kasturi Gupta, come first. In the past these Department of Education grants have been three-year awards, but more was at stake this round as the award period is four years and takes us through spring 2010. There is a literal down side, in that the level of funding was significantly less than we hoped; these cuts were across-the-board and no reflection on the quality of our Center. Nonetheless, we find ourselves pressed to seek additional institutional support to keep our core programs flourishing.

Back to pure ups: Last year saw the tenuring of two core South Asia faculty, Tula Goenka in Newhouse and Prema Kurien in Sociology. This year we have every reason to anticipate that Cecilia vanHollen will complete her smooth passage to tenure in Anthropology. Moreover, academic year 2006-07 saw an amazing bonanza for our Center: four new faculty with South Asia research foci hired in regular lines. Three joined in the fall: Farzana Afridi in Economics, Iswari Pandey in Writing and Rhetoric, and Romita Ray in Fine Arts. You can read about them in this newsletter. The fourth person, Jennifer Hyndman in the Department of the Geography, we welcome this spring and will highlight in our next edition. All four new faculty members are featured speakers in our spring seminar series celebrating local talent. This academic year we also welcome back to our campus Syracuse Anthropology alum Alicia DeNicola, who is a postdoctoral fellow here in the Humanities. Our faculty continue to rake in fellowships, awards and honors and to pour out publications and presentations. You can read in this newsletter about Prema Kurien's Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, as well as many other recent achievements of our accomplished crew.

Our seminar series, one of a few truly interdisciplinary intellectual communities on this campus, draws enthusiastic participants including undergraduates, graduate students, faculty and community members. Our Outreach year began with a terrific event; Jishnu and Kasturi organized *South Asia Panorama* -- an educational evening for the Central New York Council for the Social Studies, which launched in style what we hope will be a long-term collaboration. The teachers who attended were wowed by topical presentations from Srikrishna Ayyangar, Payal Banerjee, and Subho Basu, as well as the political folk art exhibit provided by Sue Wadley. In the fall Cornell-Syracuse consortium initiated a new venture: each semester we will gather scholars with an interest in South Asia who are based at institutions scattered throughout our region. The first meeting, held at Cornell in November, was a smashing success. This March we will meet again in association with an Ithaca College program on Jewish cultures of India featuring music, art and academic presentations.

The future holds additional challenges and promises. We are already busily preparing for a pedagogical adventure: South Asian language offerings via new distance learning technology in the Humanities Center. In Fall 07 we expect to make "Introduction to Bengali" as taught at Cornell available to students in Syracuse, with a native-speaker preceptor physically present in the classroom. In the same fashion, on their campus, Cornell students will be able to enroll in our Tamil 101.

Although there are no big conferences this spring, we have two extraordinary events planned for the last week of March -- made possible by co-sponsorship from multiple sources across campus. On Wednesday, March 28 at 4 pm, we host a drama troupe from India who will give us a taste of political street theater; and on Thursday March 29 at 7 pm, we present a flute concert featuring both Indian and Japanese flute music. Moreover, look for an action-packed fall. Our consortium partner Cornell is planning a South Asia symposium in association with the Future of Minority Studies Research Project (Part I of this conference took place in Delhi this winter), as well as a workshop on Afghanistan. And on September 29 Syracuse will host *Development, Politics and Public Health Issues in South Asia*. Cecilia vanHollen is the chief organizer for this, and plans are well underway.

In sum, your South Asia Center is in perpetual motion and we welcome your requests, ideas and involvement.

Ann Grodzins Gold
aggold@syr.edu

New Faces at Syracuse University

Farzana Afridi



Dr. Farzana Afridi grew up in India and did her undergraduate study in Econom-

ics at the highly competitive Lady Shri Ram College for Women in New Delhi. She then went on to undertake graduate study at the premier institution for the discipline – Delhi School of Economics -- and migrated to the US for her doctoral program which she completed at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Dr. Afridi's passion for Economics goes back a long way, as she geared her concentration in high school toward the discipline. She prefers to understand the discipline of Economics from a broad perspective as a study in human behavior with widespread relevance in arenas such as politics, sociology, and global affairs.

Her specific interests in the field of Economics lie in the areas of development and economics, family issues, demography and public finance. She conducted fieldwork researching school meal programs and their impact in South Central Madhya Pradesh – a state in Central India. The project involved interaction with rural communities to oversee the implementation of the meal programs and to examine how public programs in general were implemented and their impacts measured in India. She describes this project as the single most exciting experience of her career. Dr. Afridi's program resulted in a government mandate to provide free lunch to public primary schools in 1995 and a cooked-meal program in 2000 which greatly improved nutrition and health in the region.

Her deep commitment to academia as well as practical impli-

cations in a globalizing world is truly noteworthy. Her enthusiasm stems from the fact that developing nations are in such a dynamic and volatile stage of their political and economic lives. To be a part of the changing developing world and to be studying an enormous chunk of the world population seems highly relevant to her as we approach ideas of global citizenship. Dr. Afridi plans to continue researching and publishing especially on education and health in developing countries. She is particularly appreciative of the support of her colleagues at the Maxwell School, and for their expertise and expectations which she finds inspiring and motivating.

Romita Ray



Dr. Romita Ray grew up in Calcutta – the city that served as the Indian capital during British rule. Harboring dreams of being a classicist, she studied European art during her

undergraduate work and into her graduate career. While working on a book that dealt with Victorian women authors and artists, she chanced upon Emily Eden who was a British writer and artist living in India during the Raj. Dr. Ray calls this finding a “happy accident” – one that determined the course of her professional and academic career. She realized that very few art scholars were trained art historians on British India. Her curiosity and responsibility toward a huge part of Indian political and artistic history steered her graduate studies and current interests which lie in British India and contemporary South Asian art and architecture.

Dr. Ray describes her research and work as extremely exciting because it affords her the opportunity to travel and rediscover India through different lenses and angles – a country she hasn't lived in for the past eighteen years. She admits that in many ways a sense of nostalgia and belonging has also been a driving force in her adventures, discoveries, and travels around the world. Dr. Ray is also extremely interested in the

South Asian art Diaspora – a mobile set of ideas and aesthetics. Questions like where else in the world South Asian art is being created and how it brings ideas together are important in this regard.

She is involved in projects with museum collections around the world; the most current one being an exhibition examining the British Empire in the 18th and 19th Century. The exhibition will open in London in March 2007. An aspect of her profession that she particularly treasures is when she is traveling to find art and architecture pieces from different parts of the world. Dr. Ray describes such projects as playing detective and hunting for art as transforming her experiences of cities. She also enjoys exchanging ideas and conversations with other artists who are equally passionate about re-discovering the world through art.

Dr. Ray is excited about being at Syracuse University and is encouraged by the support she has received from the South Asia Center. She is currently working on manuscripts for two books – the first is about a landscape aesthetic when applied to a foreign place; and the second is a visual history of tea consumption in Britain and her colonies with the hope of understanding the Raj by looking at other parts of the empire. Dr. Ray feels that her discipline is highly relevant in a world that is increasingly witnessing a merging of cultures and identities where paradoxically, the notion of the empire is very much alive. The study of art history allows a study of the exchange of ideas through art, language, architecture, and philosophy which bind communities together.

Iswari Pandey



Dr. Iswari Pandey was born and raised in the mid-hills of the Himalayas in Kathmandu, where he

did his graduate work and then went on to teach in the Tribhuvan University. Dr. Pandey, comes from a very eclectic back-

ground, having spent some time serving as a community activist, as a journalist as well as a radio and news broadcaster.

He did his M.A. with a focus on British postcolonial literature related to South Asia. His hunger and interest for knowledge was never quite satiated and so he went on to pursue his PhD at the University of Louisville.

Dr. Pandey's area of expertise is Cultural rhetoric, an area of research which is quite as interesting as it sounds. The research involves examining how rhetoric differs in different cultures, and is extremely relevant in today's world given the merging of different cultures due to globalization. He also is an expert on ethnography and analytical writing.

Naturally, given his vast knowledge on cultural issues and his diverse background, I had to ask how he stumbled onto this field. Was it an interest he always had, or purely accidental? His answer was not only romantic it was inspiring. To Dr. Pandey, being able to respond to texts that have analyzed his culture as a colony was rewarding. The ability to voice his own opinions not merely as a member of a colonized state but as a person, an individual, empowered him. He found that the ability to make changes in the way people understand the world, and assisting them in voicing these understandings, is extremely rewarding. He believes that especially in the context of a world that is headed towards globalization, his current research proves to be extremely relevant due to its interdisciplinary nature. It merges cultural, social, literary and rhetorical analysis and studies. This is very important in the merging of cultures and trying to understand them.

He believes that his discipline plays an important role in the emerging global context which is an art of global citizenship – his job is writing about and composing that art. The field of writing and rhetoric is not just about teaching grammar, it stretches its branches to acquire a more humanistic nature and to aid in sociological inquiry.

While in school, Dr. Pandey used to be capable of memorizing and reciting Sanskrit text very quickly and even won awards for that talent. He used to be so good at Sanskrit that in his village, he used to be the person sought out

if anyone had trouble reading in Sanskrit. On one occasion, there was a woman who asked him to assist her in reading a letter. As he was going through it, he chanced upon some words that he didn't understand. He was baffled at these new foreign words, which seemed quite strange to him. He made up his mind to learn them: the words were in English.

Dr. Iswari Pandey has spent one semester at Syracuse University, and he seems to be adjusting well to the student population and his colleagues.

Alicia De Nicola: A Familiar Face Returns to Syracuse



Dr. Alicia DeNicola is originally from Florence, Oregon – a small logging and tourist town on the West Coast. Trained as a journalist, she worked in Florence for a local newspaper where she treasured the close-knit community and the opportunity to talk and get to know the local people. Upon moving to Baltimore she began working with larger newspapers which did not afford her the same scope to communicate on local issues. Being swept in an impersonal tide of stories took away the joy of journalism and she discovered that the discipline of Anthropology would allow her to sustain her interest in the needs and mechanisms of the community in a more detailed manner than journalism would.

During Dr. DeNicola's graduate work at Brandeis University, she became involved in research with a

mentor who worked in West Bengal in India. Therefore, it was only by serendipity that her interest in South Asia bloomed and she came to Syracuse University for her PhD where she was mentored by Dr. Sue Wadley who was the director of the South Asia Center. She became interested in studying the development and sustenance of business ventures that are family centered rather than based on corporate ideologies. Her own childhood spent in a logging town where her parents owned a small business also motivated her to focus on South Asia – a region that culturally valued holding families and communities together.

Dr. DeNicola spent a year and a half completing language training and studying block-printing businesses in Rajasthan. She is particularly interested in the intersection of work and the environment and has been researching availability of water resources in a small town in Rajasthan and how government regulation affects independent businesses that run the economies of towns and small cities. Dr. DeNicola is fascinated by the study of class and the social construction of poor, middle, working or educated classes.

Although the journey from Florence to Syracuse via Rajasthan has been long and rewarding and there is not much that Dr. DeNicola would change, she admits that it hasn't been easy. Being away from her husband in India was very difficult and acclimatizing to living in India took some time. But her stay in India was made special by her two hosts who were teachers. She reminisces about casual dinners when all three cooked and ate together – this is how she came to know about and live her life in India, through becoming part of another community.

Dr. DeNicola plans to continue teaching and is interested in pursuing her research on anthropological links among communities both in Oregon and India. She feels that the discipline of Anthropology is highly pertinent in a globalizing world because in answering questions of how to understand and make our world better, there is a history that needs to be contended with and worked through. Anthropology allows for reflexivity and helps in understanding global communities through which change can be channeled.

OUTREACH EVENT AT LONG BRANCH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL — Kasturi Gupta/Suprita Kudesia

I was sitting at work when my computer told me that I had new mail. I turned around and saw an email from Long Branch Elementary School. The name was not familiar and I was intrigued. The email was a request for the Outreach Coordinator to participate in a day-long event on international cultures. I was asked to engage elementary school children in a presentation on India. My first reaction was surprise. Being a graduate student I am used to talking and making presentations on South Asia to adults, I have never presented in front of young children.

I immediately rushed to Jishnu's office and told him about the email. He realized I was distressed, gave me a bright smile offered me a cookie and asked me to relax. He explained to me that these were little children who would appreciate exposure to elements of Indian culture.

Jishnu, Suprita and I brainstormed together and decided to make the girls wear saris as an introduction to Indian clothes; draw henna tattoos/designs on their hands; tell them about Diwali and lastly serve them samosas as a taste of Indian cuisine.

Suprita and I reached Long Branch Elementary School very early in the morning. As we were entering the school we saw all the school kids smiling and waving at us. We were greeted by the school-teachers and parent volunteers who were participating in the program. We were allotted a huge classroom which also had all the technological amenities. Suprita got busy decorating the room with maps, posters and beautiful Indian rugs and curtains, while I started baking the samosas for the program.

Our first audience was a group of 2nd graders. Strangely enough, both Suprita and I were very tense and excited at the same time. We started by greeting them with a Namaste and asked everyone to join in doing so. While I got busy with designing henna tattoos on everyone's hands, Suprita started explaining about Diwali. After the presentation on Diwali, I invited five volunteers for a sari draping session. All the hands went up, including hands of little boys. The girls were all excited once they wore the saris and had bindis on their foreheads. I also asked the class teacher to wear a sari. At the end of the sari draping, we served the samosas and I have never seen them disappear so fast. The children had interesting questions such as why men didn't wear saris and how people communicated with each other if there were so many languages. Some even knew that India had been colonized by the British which explained the prevalence of English as a major language in India.

Before we knew it, the day was over. The experience was extremely rewarding because of the enthusiasm of the children who participated. All were extremely adventurous and yearning to know more about new places and people. It was an excellent initiative by the Long Branch Elementary School and I was glad to have been given the opportunity to participate.



CENTRAL NEW YORK SCHOLARS OF SOUTH ASIA ASSOCIATION MEETING

(Summarized from the report by Durga Bor, South Asia Program, Cornell University)

The Consortium of the South Asia Program at Cornell and the South Asia Center at Syracuse University hosted the inaugural meeting of the Central New York Scholars of South Asia Association (CNYSSAA) on Saturday, November 4, 2006, on the Cornell campus. The aim of this newly formed organization is to meet at least twice yearly, share research experiences and ideas from a broad range of disciplines, and perhaps eventually develop some joint research undertakings.



The highlight of the day was a panel discussion around the theme "South Asian cross-country perspectives: possibilities for comparative and collaborative work". A representative panel of Cornell and Syracuse core South Asia faculty talked about the ways in which their work may be seen to cross regional and national boundaries and also about potential collaborations to create cross-regional and transnational conversations. Alaka Basu, Cornell's South Asia Program Director, and faculty in the Department of Sociology described her research on demographic change in Bangladesh and the state of West Bengal in India; Chandra Talpade Mohanty (Syracuse University, Department of Women's Studies) described her own personal and professional journey as a feminist scholar and

activist; Professor Emeritus Kenneth Kennedy (Cornell University, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology) gave an account of his on-going research about the palaeoanthropology of South Asia; Subho Basu (Syracuse University, Department of History) touched on three separate research topics – on colonial capital and worker's resistance in Bengal (1890-1937), on the relationship between state and society in Nepal, and on Bengali travel writings of the late colonial period; Iftikar Dadi (Cornell University, Department of the History of Art) described the two themes of his work, the theorization of the role of the modern in the art and visual culture of the non-West, and the methodological insights of this first theme; Romita Ray (Syracuse University, Department of Fine Arts) gave a lively description of her research on the visual history of tea consumption in Europe and the colonies; and Joanne Waghorne (Syracuse University, Department of Religion) gave a summary of her work on contemporary Hindu temples and the Hindu diaspora. The day closed with a brainstorming about future activities around which the association can meet. One possibility is a workshop on developments in research methodology – cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary – that are particularly relevant to South Asian Studies. We also invite all scholars of South Asia to join our group. You can be put on the e-mail list by sending your name and college or university (independent scholars are welcome as well) to nsj1@cornell.edu.

Spring Events

Maya Dodd, Princeton University
 Genres of Indian Freedom:
 Diaries of Democracy Since the Emergency of 1975
January 23, 12:30-1:50 pm, 341 Eggers

Ronald Herring, Cornell University
 Social Origins of [Degrees of] Democracy
 in South Asia: Revisiting Barrington Moore's Puzzle
February 06, 12:30-1:50pm, 060 Eggers

Jamie Johnson, Syracuse University
 Conserving Heritage, Constructing Identity:
 Saving Place in a Himalayan Tourist Town
February 13, 12:30-1:50 pm, 341 Eggers

Amina Jamal, SUNY, Potsdam
 Transnational Feminism and Muslim Women
February 20, 12:30-1:50pm, 341 Eggers

Farzana Afridi, Syracuse University
 School Meals in India: An Impact Assessment
February 28, 4:00 pm, 100 Eggers

Subho Basu, Syracuse University
 Reading Colonial Geography and Ideas of Global Hierarchy
 of Civilizations among Bengali Literati
March 6, 12:30– 1:50 pm, 341 Eggers

Romita Ray, Syracuse University
 Storm in a Teacup? Visualizing Tea Consumption in British
 India
March 20, 12:30 –1:50 pm, 341 Eggers

Jennifer Hyndman, Syracuse University
 The Securitization of Fear in Post-Tsunami Sri Lanka
March 27, 12:30-1:50pm, 341 Eggers

Jana Natya Manch (People's Theatre Group) present
Voh Bol Uthi (And She Spoke Up) and Nahi Qabool
 (Unacceptable!)
March 28, 4:00 pm, Eggers Commons

Indian Classical & Indo-Japanese Crossover Music
March 29, 7pm, Maxwell Auditorium

Iswari Pandey, Syracuse University
 Engendering "Authentic" Culture in the Diaspora
April 3, 12:30-1:50pm, 341 Eggers

Diya Das, Syracuse University

Moushumi Shabnam, Syracuse University
 Immigrants in Queens, NY in the post 9/11 era: an ethno-
 graphic study

William Kuracina, Syracuse University
 A Paradoxical Resistance: contextualizing Indian National-
 ism and British Imperialism
April 17, 12:30– 1:50pm, 341 Eggers

Bandita Sijapati, Syracuse University
 Political Socialization in Transnational Spaces: the Case of
 Nepali Diaspora
April 24, 12.30– 1.50pm, 341 Eggers



Jana Natya Manch (People's Theatre Group) present
Voh Bol Uthi (And She Spoke Up) and Nahi Qabool
 (Unacceptable!)
March 28, 4:00 pm, Eggers Commons



Indian Classical & Indo-Japanese Crossover Music:
 featuring Tim Hoffman, shakuhachi, and Mayookh
 Bhaumik, tabla
March 29, 7pm, Maxwell Auditorium

Faculty Updates

Tej Bhatia, Languages, Literatures and Linguistics, is in India this spring with a Fulbright award for his research project, "Religion, Language and Advertising in Rural India."

Ann Grodzins Gold, Religion and Anthropology, continues in her second, and final year as one of two William P. Tolley Distinguished Teaching Professors in the Humanities. She was elected and inducted into the American Society for the Study of Religion (ASSR). Her chapter, "Love's Cup, Love's Thorn, Love's End: The Language of *Prem* in Ghatiyali" appeared in the volume, *Love in South Asia: A Cultural History*, edited by Francesca Orsini, and published by Cambridge University Press. An article, "Malaji's Hill: Divine Sanction, Community Action," co-authored with Bhoju Ram Gujar, appeared in the journal, *Context: Built, Living and Natural*. She presented a paper, "Tasteless Profits and Vexed Moralities in Rural Rajasthan" in the Agrarian Studies Colloquium Series at Yale University, as well as to the South Asia Seminar at Cornell. She also delivered a paper, "Disco or Deshi? Tastes and Seeds of Memory in Rural Rajasthan," at a conference on "Cultural Memory and Cultures in Transition," at Vilnius University, Vilnius, Lithuania.

Tazim Kassam, Religion, was appointed Chair of the Religion Department in 2006. Together with her colleagues Gustav Niebuhr (Religion) and Merhrzad Boroujerdi (Political Science), she is one of three principal co-investigators for a major three-year Henry R. Luce Foundation Grant awarded to the Maxwell School to develop curricular materials at the intersection of *Religion, Media and International Relations* to prepare future leaders in public policy and administration. She is Director of a major new interdisciplinary study abroad program on *Muslim Cultures* that will be launched in Fall 2007 at Syracuse University's London center in Bloomsbury. Professor Kassam was invited to speak at the 2006 Fall Convocation on Khaled Hosseini's book *The Kite Runner* which was selected as Syracuse University's shared reading for first-year students and the CNY Reads program. She was also a speaker at an international Peace Summit hosted at Syracuse University titled *Small World, Big Divides: Building Bridges in an Age of Extremes* which is available as a webcast at <http://www.buildingbridges.syr/live/>. Prof. Kassam presented a paper on "The Ginan Singer" at a conference on *South Asian Religious Transnationalism* organized by the South Asia Consortium in April. She is currently editing a volume with Steven Ramey on *Religious Boundaries and Synergies in South Asia*, and working on a new study of the devotional music of Ismaili Muslims.

Prema Kurien, Sociology, received a fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars (2006-2007) for her project "Contemporary Ethnic Lobbies: Asian Indians Americans on the Hill." Her latest book, *A Place at the Multicultural Table: The Development of an American Hinduism* is currently in press and she did field research in India during the summer of 2006 on a project on

"Transnationalism and the Mar Thoma Church." She published several articles including "Multiculturalism and the 'American' Religion: The Case of Hindu Indian Americans" in the journal *Social Forces* and "Mr. President, Why do you Exclude us from your Prayers?: Hindus Challenge American Pluralism" in *A Nation of Religions: The Politics of Pluralism in Multireligious America* edited by Stephen Prothero.

Chandra Talpade Mohanty wrote the foreword to a new book, *Playing With Fire, Feminist Thought Wrapped in Seven Lives*, by Richa Nagar and the Sangtin Writers Collective, published by the University of Minnesota Press. Her article, "U.S. Empire and The Project of Women's Studies: Stories of Citizenship, Complicity, and Dissent," appeared in *Gender, Place and Culture, A Journal of Feminist Geography*. She has given several keynote lectures, including "Anti-Imperialist Feminist Praxis," at the University of Toledo, and "Where is Home: Gender, Sexuality, and Transnationalism," at the University of Dearborn, Michigan, Center for Arab American Studies, as well as numerous other conference and panel presentations both national and international. Her latest book, *Feminism without Borders*, has been widely reviewed in key feminist and postcolonial journals over the past two years.

Jishnu Shankar, Hindi Instructor and Associate Director of the South Asia Center, Moynihan Institute, Maxwell, had his book, *The Book of Aghor Wisdom* published by Indica Books. He was elected as the Vice-President of the South Asia Language Teachers Association, and also made a presentation on "Internet Enhanced Teaching and Learning: The Uses of a Virtual Language Lab in a Project-Based Classroom," at the South Asia Studies conference University of Wisconsin at Madison, Madison, Wisconsin.

Larry Schroeder, Political Science, directed the fifth annual training course for senior Indian civil service officers who are currently enrolled in a master's level public policy course at the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore. He also spent one week at the Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore (IIMB) to work with IIMB faculty in designing an eight week training program, sponsored by the Government of India and the Executive Education Program at The Maxwell School, for IAS officers to be conducted in Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration during 2007.

Cecilia Van Hollen, Anthropology, received an American Institute for Indian Studies (AIIS) Senior Short Term Fellowship for her research HIV/AIDS, Women, and Childbearing in Tamil Nadu, India. Her article pertaining to this research entitled "Navigating HIV, Pregnancy, and Childbearing in South India: Pragmatics and constraints in women's decision-making" will be published in January 2007 in *Medical Anthropology*. She was invited to present a paper on "HIV/AIDS and Birth: Local responses to global policies and technologies in South India," for the Rockefeller Foundation conference on *Reproduction, Globalization, and the State* in Bellagio, Italy,

Faculty Updates

June 1–7, 2006. She is revising this paper for publication. She published a book review in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* on *Birthing in the Pacific: Beyond Tradition and Modernity?* edited by Vicki Lukere and Margaret Jolly. She was also a guest speaker on “Sri Lanka and the Ethnonationalist Conflict: Anthropological Perspectives” for a Maxwell School International Relations course.

Susan S. Wadley, Ford Maxwell Professor of South Asian Studies, continued her research in the changing practices surrounding weddings in rural India, and presented a paper, “Transforming Rural Weddings and Redefining ‘conjuality’ in North India” at the South Asia Program, University of Iowa. She also conducted a traveling seminar with SU students studying abroad in India in early November focusing on the “selling of Rajasthan” as a place, including the transformation of its crafts’ industry in response to globalization.

Joanne Punzo Waghorne, Religion, continued her research in Singapore on global gurus, especially their inroads into non-Indian populations. Her article “Spaces for a New Public Presence: The Sri Siva-Vishnu and Murugan Temples in Metropolitan Washington DC” was published in the book *American Sanctuary: Understanding Sacred Spaces* edited by Louis P. Nelson. She was also invited to present her paper entitled “From Diaspora to (Global) Civil Society: New Hindu-Based Religious Movements in Singapore” at the conference *Ritualizing In, On, and Across Boundaries* University of Pittsburgh.



... After the museum, we crossed the busy road to stroll through the park...

Page from the sketch book of John Thompson's student on the project "Drawing India."

WOODROW WILSON FELLOW– Prema Kurien

Prema Kurien, Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology, has been recently named a Woodrow Wilson Center Fellow and will be engaged for the coming year in a study of Indian-American lobby groups, the factors that influence their formation, their interactions with each other and with policy makers. How do Indian immigrants involve themselves in the political process and influence policy makers? Are they successful in impacting domestic and foreign policy? These are only some of the questions that Dr. Kurien's research will delve into. She intends to see this project through to the 2008 national elections as it will be highly relevant in a presidential race that will grapple with volatile issues.

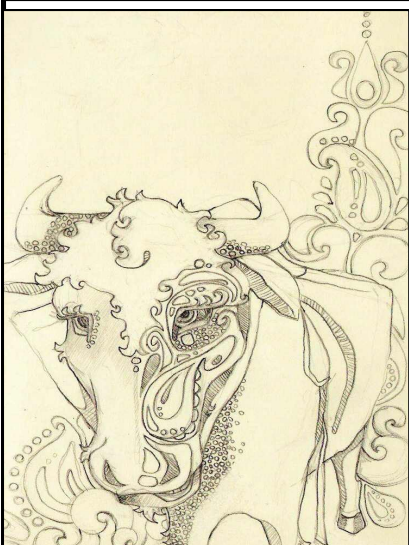
Having grown up in India with its diversity of people, ethnicities, religion, and language, Dr. Prema Kurien cultivated a deep interest in understanding human behavior and why people do what they do. To probe into the answers to these questions, Dr. Kurien undertook the study of Psychology for her undergraduate career but found the discipline too narrow to cater to her broader interests of understanding the intricacies of society and the roles that people play in the communities they create for themselves. This led to a graduate study program in Sociology first in India and then in the US. Dr. Kurien explains that moving to the US only heightened her interest in the diversity of ethnicities and cultures and their impact on human behavior because she felt her own ethnic identity emphasized. Her academic career has flourished with her passion to grapple with key issues in an increasingly globalizing world. Her research interests explore the relationship between international migration, ethnicity, religion and politics.

In addition to the lobby groups project, Dr. Kurien is also involved in studying a particular denomination of Indian-American Churches and the transmission of religion and ethnicity – a truly transnational endeavor. Dr. Kurien has authored *Kaleidoscopic Ethnicity: International Migration and the Reconstruction of Community Identities in India* (2002) and has another forthcoming book entitled *A Place at the Multicultural Table: The Development of an American Hinduism* as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters.

Dr. Kurien is grateful to the South Asia Centre for its support, resources, and intellectual stimulation. She values being part of the community that is the South Asia Centre which also provides a forum for her academic interests. In the face of globalization, Dr. Kurien is happy that Sociology is slowly adapting to the needs of a changing world. Due to her transnational interests, her work was initially marginalized within Sociology. But the discipline is increasingly shedding its parochial character and assuming a more cosmopolitan one which is highly pertinent in helping people understand the phenomenon and effects of globalization.

SU ABROAD - The Indian Experience

Impressions from student participants in John Thompson's short-term winter break course: "Drawing India"



This trip to India exceeded all expectations. From the moment we six girls stepped off the plane into the foggy streets of Delhi, our senses were bombarded with the unfamiliar. I found this experience very inspiring in terms of my art, but more importantly I have grown to appreciate another culture so different from my own. Every day was packed with sights to see, foods to eat, sounds to hear, and people to encounter. I can honestly say that every day was a blast, despite our frequent run-ins with sickness.

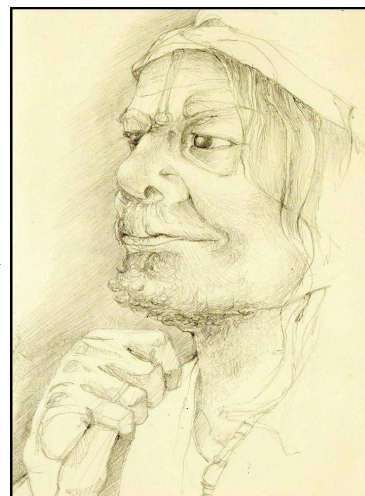
India is visually exotic. Several places that stood out were the Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb, Amber Fort, Taj Mahal, and Lotus Temple. Their sheer size is breathtaking. However with closer investigation, the minute detail and intricacies of every brick and stone is overwhelming. It was made obvious that painstaking handwork and craftsmanship went into the engraving of every pattern and scripture. The architecture is beautiful and the fact that they have withstood the test of time still amazes me. Indian art, at least the ones that we have seen, seems to be going in two directions. There we saw the continuing of the traditional miniature painting of old done with mongoose and squirrel brushes. The other was the contemporary style; one in particular was the abstract painter S. H. Raza. Both hold their own respective uniqueness that allows it to stand distinct and prominent.

Indian cuisine was another very important experience. Chili levels took some time to get used to, but nevertheless the many flavors that enveloped my taste buds were fantastic. My

favorites would include mutton biryani, chicken pulao, garlic naan, poori, masala dosas, pickled lime, and many more. Now it seems every other food is simply bland in comparison.

We had some memorable and interesting encounters with the Indian population. Overall they are a very inquisitive, curious, fun, industrious people. I found the people in the villages much more sincere and genuine than the ones in the city. Maybe this is because they were not looking at how deep our pockets were, but instead at the differences in our faces, our clothing, and our language. There seemed to be a mutual attraction. We were intrigued with their lifestyle as they were with ours. I think our interaction with the people made this trip that much more fun. We could not have possibly immersed ourselves in this culture fully without the help of the Indian people.

I walked away from this trip with many things I did not expect to acquire. India was a good home for all of us in those two and a half weeks. We all learned a little more about ourselves and about the world. It gave us another perspective of what poverty really is and helps us appreciate what we already have and what we actually need in life. I came away not only with this worldly appreciation, but also with a bond shared between six girls experiencing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. — **Boneli Lotilla**



When people ask me to describe my travels in India, I am at a loss for words. Vivid pictures flash through my mind; pig noses stuffed in the sand, indigo blankets laid out as far as the eye can see, the curling smoke of incense burning in a store overwhelmed with colors and patterns. I see knobby trees, twisting and bending in a crippled dance across fields of mustard. I picture animals so alive in my mind that I can feel the coarse hair of the camel; I hear the jingle of their bells as they dance through the streets. I feel the cow's slimy tongue on the palm of my hand; I can taste the dust in my mouth, breathe the fog hanging over the city.

I am exhausted by the images. Even my words cannot express the realness of them, the life they possess as they flash in front of my eyes. In a sense, I know that I can never fully describe my experience in India to my friends and family. When I attempt to reconstruct memories which I see clearly in my mind, I find the words leaving gaping holes from what I envision. I find that bits and pieces of the culture: the language, the stories, the spices, and the landscape, are lost in translation. How could any of them really understand what it was like? Everything in India is so vastly different; the way people dress and act, the manner in which they interact, the smells, the colors, the streets, the animals, the architecture, the trees, even the air they breathe seems as if it comes from a different planet.

Now that I am back in the United States, I feel as if I just awoke from a dream. I am disoriented, blinded by the sun on my face, I try to keep my eyes closed...to let the dream linger in my mind just a minute longer. But the harder I try to hold on, the more it slips away. Sand running through my fingers. I miss the girls, who became my family, my sisters. I miss Bhoju, our father figure. I miss the bumpy bus rides that somehow lulled me to sleep. I miss feeling like a child, just opening my eyes for the first time, reaching out and touching everything I can grab. Asking questions non-stop all day, receiving answers and feeling at home in a place I had no reason to feel at home in. — **Allison Black**



When I got to India I was overcome by the change in atmosphere: from the scenery to the social interactions between the people. It was certainly a culture shock at first but became comfortable after a while.

I cannot specifically choose a favorite moment from the trip, but I can say I was most inspired by the myriad of colors and designs found on the textiles, the architecture, and the people. Going to the FabIndia stores was incredible. There were shelves and shelves full of all imaginable Indian garments. Being interested in fashion and textiles, it was interesting to discover the varieties and styles of one garment, the kurta.

Also fascinating were the vast differences between the Indian and American style of dress. In India I had no qualms about wearing the huge baggy pants known as salwars but I was curious as to how they would translate if I wore them at home, in America. Much to my surprise, people in Syracuse are intrigued by them and wonder where I purchased them.

While FabIndia provided a hands-on experience to see every possible combination of a garment, Anokhi opened my mind to the endless design possibilities. As a surface/pattern design major, I was in awe of the varieties of patterns on the clothing and home furnishings. I especially enjoyed our visit to the Anokhi Textile Museum in Jaipur. Seeing examples of block printed fabrics made into garments and the raw process of the block print was something I will never forget. I was impressed with the methods that these artists and designers used. — *Sarah Renert*

What actually first inspired me to go to India was when I was still in high school. For a school trip with my art class we went to an exhibition at Syracuse University which was showcasing long painted scrolls that told different stories. I remember that there was an artist who came all the way from India to demonstrate this style of painting. This exhibition had such an impact on me that from then on I always dreamed about going to India. Little did I know that I would be able to go so early on in my life and with the same University that sparked my interest with the country years earlier.

I have had the privilege to travel around parts of Europe but never have I had a trip make such an impact on me as this trip to India. Each day my eyes were opened to new colors, my nose smelled new scents, and my tongue tasted a range of spices that I never new existed.

I think that one of my most memorable moments was when we went to see where they did block printing in a village outside of Jaipur. Before we got to the building we had to walk through this massive field of sand where they laid out all of the pieces of fabric to dry. It was such a beautiful sight seeing this barren ground decorated with all different colors of cloth. I was also fascinated by the process of creating these printed fabrics. When we walked inside the building there was a woman in a large pool of white water washing the bleach out of the fabric. She was fully dressed in her sari. The image of her still sticks out so vibrantly in my mind of these beautiful colors against the pure white of the water. As we went further back there were people doing the different layers of the block prints. I was amazed at how quickly they were able to stamp the fabric. The man who was giving us the tour let each one of us do a part of the fabric. I must say I have much more respect for the skill that goes into creating these fabrics after actually printing a part myself. (I unfortunately should probably not go into the printing business!)

Another thing that sticks out in my mind about that day was when we saw a group of children pouring something out on the ant hills around the indigo dyed fabric. Being from America I automatically thought that it was poison to kill them, but I found out I was mistaken. These children were actually feeding the ants; something that is unheard of in the US. I don't know what it was about that moment that hit me so hard but I feel like I grew a better appreciation for all living things around me and for the human heart. I know that they were merely feeding ants but I hope that I can use that kind of compassion I saw that day in my everyday life.

For me India was not merely a trip, it was a turning point in my life. I never knew that two weeks in a new place could make a person grow so much. — *Lydia Radke*



INDIA IN ART: As Experienced by our Students

CRAFT MUSUEM:

The craft museum was nothing I had imagined. It was mostly outdoors and we could climb on old camel carts and explore different types of houses used in India. Then we came to a part where artists were actually working and explaining how they complete their craft.

CHHATRAPUR

TEMPLE: This complex of buildings was amazing. It even spread out to cross the road! There are patterns everywhere...



COOL CAMELS:

Little did I know, I would get to ride camels! In my opinion they are way cooler than holy cows. They have beautiful lips, big eyelashes, fun little bells wear and of course- awesome camel toes. In my opinion they are way cooler than holy cows! I really want one — and riding one was one of the best moments of this trip.

Undergraduate Mary Gallagher participated in SU Abroad's fall semester in India program, and describes the last week of her sojourn in: *Unpredictable India*

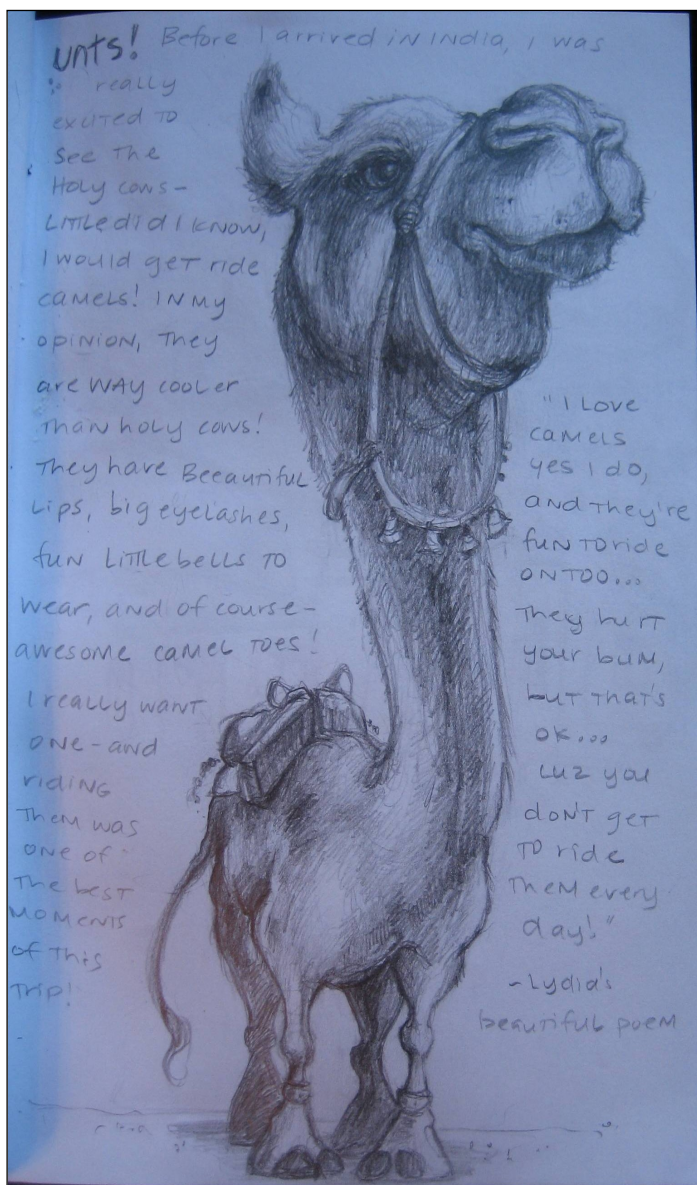


Karimgunj formed around us after a solid six hours of bumpy roads and raucous honking. (after all the months I've spent in India, I have yet to condition myself to the strident noise of the streets and highways; Indian horns, unlike their

American counterparts, are turn signals, passing alerts, warnings of nearness, and location markers and, as such, are a constant backdrop to driving). Our traveling seminar was coming to a close, and this was to be our last stop on our tour of northern India: Karimgunj, an authentic village in Uttar Pradesh, one of the poorest states in all of India.

We had been gradually prepared for the lifestyle we would be met with while in Karimgunj. Dean Wadley, our seminar leader, has an impressive forty years experience of living in and researching this village, and her advice was supported with reading material and shorter visits to a village in Rajasthan and a relocated village family in New Delhi. Even so, as our car jolted down streets laid by the villagers in an uneven network of bricks, transitioned onto narrow dirt alleys almost completely blocked by water buffalo with fodder dripping out of their lazily chewing maws, and tilted precariously beside a pond covered with a thick green sludge, I couldn't help but feel as though we'd made a wrong turn somewhere and accidentally driven into the centerfold of a National Geographic magazine.

I came to India to experience something new and different, something radical and jarring; as my days here move towards their conclusion, I realize that I have certainly gotten that and a lot more. India has defied all of my expectations, and it hasn't always been easy. In fact, all the stories people have told me about how they went to India in their youth, absolutely hated it, and were inevitably drawn back to fall in love have sent shivers down my spine. Until, that is, the village happened. When we first toured the village, a huge throng of schoolchildren trailed us as we walked and engulfed us whenever we stopped to watch something or meet someone. Later, these same children surrounded me to teach me Hindi. The family's eldest daughter spent hours applying henna to my hands and feet, we spent nights playing marathon games of Safari Rummy by the light of a gas lantern, and the little girl next door—my favorite girl in the village—found me whenever I left the house, grabbed my hand, and stared up at me with the biggest and happiest smile that I have ever seen. A world like this would never exist in America. In three short days I understood how four months of desperately yearning for the comforts of home can become irrelevant. That's the power of India: a day, an hour, a minute can change everything. — *Mary Gallagher*



NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Jamie Johnson describes the AIIS Urdu Program in Lucknow.....

The American Institute of Indian Studies hosts a range of summer language training programs in India each year, including Hindi, Urdu, Tamil, Bengali, and more. Unlike University-offered courses, these programs are considered "intensive" due to their unique cultural immersion component. Students spend nearly three months studying in host-language-only classrooms and living in cities which best facilitate a holistic learning experience. This was the format I had anticipated for the Summer Urdu language training program in Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh. As a beginning script learner entirely lacking in Urdu vocabulary or wherewithal, I knew hard work and the heat would go hand-in-hand. But what I had not anticipated was the city's thriving literary culture. Once the princely seat of the Nawab, Lucknow's monumental architecture, bookstores, and especially sweet-tongued shopkeepers and citizens offered a special glimpse into its Muslim and Hindu heritage. I came away from the program with a new perspective on South Asian culture, and I await the opportunity to return for further language study.

This past summer, twice as many students attended the Urdu program than in years before, owing in part to the Critical Languages Scholarship program facilitated through the US Department of State. Under the new direction of Madam Sheba Ish-tahar, the expanded faculty was comprised of language scholars sporting a range of expertise from linguistics to Urdu literature.

The courses themselves were incredibly demanding. I faced the challenge of both adjusting to the Persianized vocabulary my teachers spoke, as well as keeping up with their explanations in an Urdu-only instruction medium. The overall classroom presentation style was firm and direct, and the material and course load was difficult if not a bit overwhelming.

In the beginning of the Program, the 20+ students were separated into groups according to performance on aptitude tests. After the two-week crash-course for script learners, classes consisted of conversation, vocabulary, grammar, poetry and literature, listening comprehension, newspaper reading, weekly presentations, and journal correction for which we had to submit a weekly journal. Entries would then be read out loud and discussed within our group, allowing us to hear about each other's adventures as well as to expand our vocabulary. To prepare for our weekly Bollywood film viewing, we would practice reading the script out loud, and then would follow up by watching the movie over and over until we could keep up with the dialogue. Tests would sometimes reflect the material we had learned that week.

Tuesday afternoons, the Institute would host a monolingual guest speaker from the community. On Thursdays we were given the option of attending a field trip of cultural significance. The most memorable event for me was actually not a speaker, but a qawwali performance there at the Institute. And much to my delight, the same group of musicians was performing at the Dewa Sharif shrine when we came to visit. Incidentally, the Dewa Sharif shrine was by far my favorite field trip. The beautiful mosque is a mausoleum for the late Sufi Saint Haji Waris Ali Shah, a traveled man who denounced his royal ancestry to preach peace many nations over. It attracts tens of thousands of Hindu and Muslim pilgrims year-round, but especially during the Dewa Fair, marking the holiday of Urs. In close second, was the fieldtrip to the Bada Imambadas, walking through the catacombs inside and viewing Lucknow from the roof.

Living in Lucknow was an adventure. Students were given the option of either staying with a host family or living at a family-operated guest house; housing arrangements proved a reliable conversation topic. Most students chose to stay in guest houses and, as such, pockets of Urdu language-learners could be found throughout the city. Each then, had to provide for their own transport. The "warm up" topic in conversation class often revolved around transportation and regaling the trials and tribulations of rush hour cycle-rickshaw rides through the crowded intersections of Hazratganj. Crossing the street on foot presented its own set of hazards. I never heard of anyone braving the Lucknowi mass transportation system.

Perhaps no offering of summer life in Lucknow would be complete without monsoon stories. I remember the electricity had gone out in a coffee shop where a few of us were studying and we left. Suddenly, a downpour of rain sent people and cows alike happily running through the streets. We took to the roof of Mrs. Sharma's guest house and cooled off while street side, exploding electrical transformers sent thrashing power lines and showers of sparks into the rising waters. My room flooded that night. But despite being caught in torrential morning downpours on school-bound rickshaw rides, or worse, wading through ankle-deep waste and run-off in weekend Aminabad shopping excursions, most students welcomed the monsoon rains and the ensuing 20 degree drop in temperature (never mind having to chase mongooses from one's room).

The break from the heat allowed us to more comfortably tour prominent monuments of Lucknow, as well as to interact with shopkeepers and clientele in the chikan outlets, bookstores, and various storefront marketplaces. It also gave us incentive to spare some time to explore the city. In older neighborhoods, the combination of Muslim-influenced vernacular architecture and British art-nouveau-era bungalows seemed to display a patina of history-in-the-making. This sensation sharpened when contrasted against the creeping construction of commercial centers and skyscraper condominiums belonging to new neighborhoods across the Gomati River.

The AIIS applications for Urdu Intensive Summer 2007 Language Training are due soon, and I hope for an opportunity to return there for further language study.



....and her subsequent research visit to Ladakh

Email from Leh

Hey Everyone! I'm here in Leh once again, and it's so wonderful to be back... like returning home. The familiar altitude headache is even setting in :) I actually like the room I'm staying in now except that it's a bit small for ALL MY STUFF.... I swear I can't even fathom the amount of crap I've successfully lugged from U.P. to Kashmir.

Yeah- so adventures in getting here: I ended up having to pay like 25 bones in excess baggage fees. OH! And due to the whole carry-on liquids ban, I spent Sunday night carefully repacking all of my effects (for the second time). Due to a lovely little disclaimer on the Jet Airways website that Americans and Europeans with connecting flights are allowed two carry-ons, I erroneously believed that I would be able to carry the food bag (*ye sirf khana hai, na?*) plus my small travel bag onboard. Such was not the case. But- all of my inconvenience was somewhat ameliorated by the personal attention I received from one of the airport usher-types.

All-in-all, spending an extra, unnecessary 2 hours repacking *and* not being able to retrieve my prized reading material from my carry-on (before it was whisked away at the service counter sporting 3000 strategically placed "fragile" stickers, only to be identified by me on the other side of the gate- at which point I tried my best to get at least *ek kitab* from *mera* bag, but the securityvala wouldn't have it. Although he did get a good snicker out of my 6am Hindi attempts, and in exchange I got to hear him utter my favorite Indian saying: "I'm sorry madam, it's not possible." It was well worth hearing it to put into this fine travelogue.

Yar! So by the time we landed my brain was functioning again. Aside from the warm fuzzies of being back, I was a little perturbed at having to spend Rs. 150 on a taxi that didn't know his way to Sankar village up the valley. But the Hindi came in handy, and I was able to navigate like a champion and received great satisfaction in being a foreigner with local knowledge- I'm so glad I actually remembered the way, otherwise that might have been a little embarrassing, as sure as I was of the directions (and as Toto can attest, my confidence is sometimes somewhat misplaced). Oh, but Lakrook is AMAZING this time of year!!!! and full -- I took the last room. The garden is *sooo* beautiful- it's much taller than it was when I left around this time last year; no doubt owing to the heavy rains Leh has received in recent months. Oh, and the flowers!!! *Rangile phul har jaga hai!* Everywhere- every variety -- and the varieties that I sort of recognize are like twice the size and three times as fragrant. The Ameleh (grandmother), unfortunately, isn't looking too well; her cataracts have gotten worse -- but once she got close to me she remembered me, and greeted me warmly. I can't wait to show her the pictures from last year of her dressing me up. :)

Once I unpacked a bit, I settled in with a pot of organic chamomile-mint-tulsi green tea, and passed out in the Marmot (down sleeping bag) for a couple hours. When I awoke, I took a piping hot solar shower in the garden (yay! Did I mention how much I missed Lakrook?) Later, I had a great conversation in Hindi with a young Nepali named Vikas who is employed there for the summer, about the massive exodus of Nepalis into the Indian tourist industry.

But on a lighter note, (except for there is no light at the guest house b/c there is no power- and probably won't be for quite sometime...) here's what I've had for dinner the past two nights: 1: *chutaagi*- a traditional Ladakhi dish containing spinach, mustard, and collard greens, herbed potatoes and peas in a tomato-onion-garlic based broth with hand-made barley-wheat momos; raw sliced beets and carrots and some raw, green-leafy goodness; and homemade banana pudding. 2: Lightly blanched shredded cabbage with organic fennel, poppy seed, and other herbs; some sort of orange root vegetable (not as dense as yam) with **huge** broad beans and herbs; barley, black bean, and mung bean *dal* served with a hand-made barley-wheat pasta-like ball made for dipping; sliced raw beets and carrots, fresh basil, AND fresh raw arugula with black salt. *Yum!* All organic; all from the Lakrook garden. The ghost of Jamie is writing you now, b/c I'm in heaven.

Yesterday I didn't even leave the guest house. I worked all day on my Urdu vocab, making flash cards with the Hindi equivalent as a part of my experiment to see which vernacular people here use more often. Then, once I start my Ladakhi lessons, I'll add the Ladakhi equivalent below those. Oh! And this German Tibetology MA student staying at the guest house knew I was studying Urdu and showed me this Ladakhi-Urdu-English dictionary she found in town. She's just using it for the English, but I was super stoked to see it and am going to try and find one today in town. I also had an invigorating two hour conversation about social consciousness and responsibility with a German couple who are also staying at Lakrook. The woman speaks a fair bit of Hindi, so it's been lovely chatting with her and Vikas the past two nights over dinner.

Sorry for writing such a long email; I've been composing it over the past three days and am just now able to get around a bit better. I still have a headache and I doubt that physical exertion is going to do much for it... Oh well- *koi bat nahi*. Anyways.... I'll touch base as events unfold, which they no doubt will. I have many people to catch up with here in Leh, and who knows where those meetings will lead me! But like always, I'm thinking of you all fondly and looking forward to hearing from you.



NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Anthropology graduate student Karen McNamara describes her experiences in Kolkata

Giving birth to Bangla. This is what I told myself I would be doing for nine months in Kolkata on the American Institute of Indian Studies academic year language program. I had spent considerable time in Bangladesh previously as a Peace Corps volunteer, so I was ready to experience Bengal from the other side of the border, in India.

I took Kolkata head-on when I decided to find a flat of my own, instead of staying with a host family. After 3 weeks of dead-end hunting, I lucked out and found a place above my landlord-to-be's family of four. I quickly became an "Auntie" to 5-year old Koyena downstairs. They were happy because I could speak more Bangla than the Brazilian family who lived in my flat before. They could only say "thik ache, thik ache" (okay, okay). Koyena was the first in the family to go to an English-medium school and so her mom would enlist my help when translation was needed. I'd often wake up in the morning to pounding on my door. It was Kakuli who also worked for my landlord's family. She was ready to wash my floors, empty the garbage, or let the man in to deliver my fresh tube-well drinking water - - all before I rushed off to class, just a walk, a rickshaw, and a bus ride away. However, the household got used to their Karen-auntie sleeping in on the weekends and not getting up at 6 am like the rest of the house.

My days were filled with structured Bangla classes from morning to afternoon. Since we were only two students, our instructions were mostly one-on-one. I was slowly molded into a proper Kolkatan-Bangla speaker after 9 months of repeated correction of my "local" Bangladeshi accent and dialect. I learned to call my house bari instead of basha and change my "ss" sounds to "ch," and ask for "jol" instead of "pani". These subtle differences in language marked me as I became "standardized" into Kolkatan Bangla - - without losing my ability to slip back into a local tongue outside of class and when I was back in Bangladesh.

The grammar drills and dictations were often interrupted by "gossiping" with my teachers. These classroom breaks as well as fieldtrips to places like Shantiniketan with my teachers were what got me through the year. Often words or expressions would send us flying to other topics as when I found out that my teacher was engaged to be married in less than a month. This was the first wedding I went to in Kolkata and I was there to watch her be made-up and transformed into a beautiful sari-clad bride.

Taxi drivers in Kolkata, many of whom are native Hindi speakers, were often surprised that I could speak Bangla and would ask me when I was going to learn Hindi. They would be happy to know that I am now learning Hindi this year at Syracuse and am finding many words similar to Bangla, but with a new added challenge of gendered nouns.



Recent Additions to Our Outreach Video Library—Kasturi Gupta

Panihari: The Water Women of India (30 min). The filmmakers deftly capture Madras during the monsoon season and juxtapose dry, arid shots of the Thar Desert to drive home the point of drought and water scarcity in the state of Rajasthan. The movie encapsulates issues of patriarchy, gender roles, and development issues plaguing rural India, despite a booming market economy.

Thomas L. Friedman Reporting: The Other Side of Outsourcing. Celebrated New York Times columnist Thomas L. Friedman travels to India to find out more about outsourcing and the effects of globalization on Indian society. The entire movie is shot in Bangalore, the infotech capital of India. Friedman interviews CEOs, call center personal and NGO workers and lays emphasis on the term *glocalization* and offers it as a solution for India to survive the onslaught of globalization and to hold on to its tradition and culture.

Mirch Masala. A must-see by celebrated director Ketan Mehta, the movie deals with gender issues during colonial India. It is a classic storyline where a woman thwarts the sexual advances made towards her by the ruler and has to face his wrath. The

movie takes us into a journey of patriarchy, gender relations and poverty.

Addicted to Heroin (60 min). This hour long documentary unravels the next biggest threat to Afghanistan, which is heroin cultivation. Afghanistan is the largest producer of heroin in the world. The film takes us on an informative journey as to how the people of Afghanistan are coping with new rules where the government is banning opium production without providing any other alternative means of livelihood.

Medical Tourists (60 mins). This documentary takes us on a journey to Thailand and India where increasingly international travelers come for medical treatment. The film showcases several individuals who have traveled from Western countries to get medical treatment in these countries. The film is able to show us that despite the common belief that everything is best in the western hemisphere, increasingly people are traveling to Asian countries to benefit from medical treatment. Interesting to watch as it treats medical instead of technological outsourcing.

Fellows and Student Updates

FLAS FELLOWS

The South Asia Center has named nine Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellows for this academic year, whose studies will reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the Fellowship and its focus on language. We are proud to welcome to the Center's family the following individuals. For the 2006-2007 academic year, Foreign Language Area Studies fellowships were awarded to:

Sacha Banchich	Anthropology (Fall)
Brenna Dougan	International Relations/ MPA
Sangeetha Ekambaram	Religion
Connie Etter	Anthropology
Laurah Klepinger-Mathew	Anthropology (Spring)
Karen McNamara	Anthropology
Christine Shanaberger	Religion
Jessica Tevebaugh	International Relations
Nicole Wilson	Anthropology

BHARATI SUMMER RESEARCH GRANT

AY 2006-07

The friends and family of Agehananda Bharati established a memorial grant in his honor in the early 1990s. Each year, awards are made to doctoral students in the Maxwell School for research leading to their dissertation research on South Asia. This year's recipients were:

Bandita Sijapati	Social Science
Moushumi Shabnam	Anthropology
William Kuracina	History
Jamie Johnson	Anthropology

Lydia Radke's group photo in a water tank, Rajasthan, India.

Recent Graduates

Sadaf Ahmed, PhD, Anthropology, "Al-huda: The Story of Islamic Revivalism Amongst Urban Pakistani Women."

Srikrishna Ayyangar, PhD, Political Science, "Welfare populism for the rural poor: Comparing micro credit provision in India."

Vikas Choudhary, PhD, Anthropology, "Craft producers and intermediation by Government, NGOs, and Private Businesses in rural Rajasthan, India."

Haripriya Narasimhan, PhD, Anthropology, "'Our Health is in our Hands': Women Making Decisions about Health Care in Tamilnadu, South India."

Alumni Updates

Paul Chaise La Dousa, joined the Anthropology Department of Hamilton College, Clinton, New York as Assistant Professor.

Keri Olsen, has an adjunct appointment at the Department of Sociology at the University of San Francisco.

Priti Ramamurthy, was recently appointed Director of the South Asia Center at the University of Washington. She is Associate Professor of Women's Studies there.

Susan Runkle Dewey had baby Gabriel sometime over Labor Day weekend. He was a healthy 8 lbs. plus. She and her husband Bob Dewey are at DePauw in Indiana. Susan has a part time job there.

*Please send **your** news to Kasturi: "Kasturi Gupta"*
kgupta@maxwell.syr.edu



SOUTH ASIA CENTER: OUTREACH SERVICES

Funded as a National Resource Center by the Department of Education, the South Asia Center at Syracuse University serves as a liaison between Syracuse University faculty with research interests in South Asia, educators, and the wider public in the Central New York area. Our resources and faculty interests cover the South Asia region, broadly defined as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. Our audience includes educators in area schools and colleges, the general community, individuals interested in the region, and the Syracuse University community. South Asia Outreach presents workshops, seminars, lectures, film and video screenings, school and college lecture and discussion programs, cultural programs, and other public events. In addition, Outreach loans a wide variety of educational materials to educators at no cost. These resources include books, maps, videotapes, slide sets, comic books, and "hands-on" kits. We also have curriculum units and our staff is available to offer teachers advice on curriculum development. A list of our comic books and videotapes may be obtained by sending us a request with a self-addressed stamped envelope to South Asia Center, 346F Eggers Hall, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs, Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244 or on our web page at <http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/moynihan/programs/sac/>. Our phone number is (315)443-2553, email: southasia@maxwell.syr.edu.

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The South Asia Center News is the official outreach bulletin of the South Asia Center, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs, Maxwell School of Citizenship, and Public Affairs, Syracuse University.

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